

Statement of the Honorable Bob Stump
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
before the
Committee on House Administration

March 7, 2001

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Hoyer, and Members of the committee, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to present the Committee on Armed Services' funding resolution for the 107th Congress.

My friend and the committee Ranking Minority Member, Ike Skelton, joins me today in presenting our request.

The budget submission provides significant detail, so I will touch only on the highlights.

Our budget request for the 107th Congress is approximately \$10.8 million -- \$5.2 million for 2001 and \$5.7 million for 2002 -- 4.9% above the committee's authorized funding level for the 106th Congress.

The majority of the committee's requested increase is to accommodate adjustments in the salaries account -- including cost-of-living allowances, small merit increases, and some pay adjustments in view of the Speaker's recent pay order.

As of today, the committee has 53 staff, which is 7 short of our authorized staff ceiling of 60. My plan is to operate the committee with a self-imposed staff ceiling of 59. However, I will reserve the option to fill the remaining slot during this Congress if needed. It is my intention to fill staff vacancies within a very short period of time.

As you know, the Armed Services Committee operates with an essentially nonpartisan staff, within which Mr. Skelton maintains control over eight slots. It is my intention to allocate one additional staff slot to Mr. Skelton, bringing the total number of staff slots under his direct control to nine.

For purposes of all committee operations – pay, COLAs, equipment, supplies, office space, etc. – Mr. Skelton's staff is treated in exactly the same manner as the rest of the staff.

The committee's request for the 107th Congress reflects a level of resourcing that I believe is necessary to attract and retain technically qualified staff.

I also ask you to consider our request in the context of the Armed Services Committee having traditionally maintained one of the smallest staffs in the House relative to its extensive jurisdiction, broad oversight responsibilities and actual size of the committee. Even with staff at fully authorized levels, the committee's staff-to-member ratio is one-to-one.

I also want to note that the committee is requesting an increase in the equipment account. The increase is part of an effort to establish a three-year replacement cycle strategy for computers and other critical information

technology equipment, as well as to upgrade the audio-visual capabilities in our hearing rooms.

This committee has traditionally spent wisely and will continue to do so. I believe our request reflects what is needed to do our job. Although he will certainly speak to the issues himself, Mr. Skelton is a co-sponsor of the committee's funding resolution and he supports the request before you today. I look forward to working closely with him on all issues that come before our committee.

Mr. Chairman, there is one matter I would like to bring to your attention. Because of the continued growth in the size of our committee, we now have two subcommittees of a size that our subcommittee hearing rooms will not accommodate them. We have been told that our request for modifications to fix this problem is now included in the Architect's 2002 budget request.

However, with the approval of your committee, we have obligated 2000 funds for the necessary modifications and have asked the Architect's office to select a vendor and coordinate the work. We ask for your support and assistance with our request to the Architect.

Congressman Langevin is a member of the Armed Services Committee and we are working closely with him to accommodate his special requirements. Modifications to some extent in all our hearing rooms will be required.

Mr. Chairman, it was a pleasure to work with your committee during my chairmanship of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I look forward to working with you in my capacity as Chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

Your support of the Armed Services Committee's budget request is appreciated.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify and I stand ready to answer any questions.